



# SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The national economic slowdown continues to influence Southeast Idaho's labor market. Table 1 shows that the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate crept up one-tenth of a percentage point in March 2002 to 5.9 percent. The number of unemployed individuals increased by 60, which drove the unemployment rate increase. The area's unemployment rate was three-tenths of a percentage point higher than the state rate, which was 5.6 percent. From one year ago, the unemployment rate increased 1.5 percentage points because of job losses in 2001. The number of unemployed individuals increased by 670 over the year.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 240 in March 2002 over February 2002 and totaled 33,240. Increased jobs occurred in most industries but *Construction* (60) and *Government Education* (90) added the most jobs. Month-over-month *Nonfarm Payroll Job* changes were within a normal range from February to March because construction activity begins to increase after winter and education jobs peak midway through spring semester. From one year ago, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* declined by 330. *Manufacturing* (360) and *Retail Trade* (240) accounted for most of the job losses. Most of the year-over-year jobs losses occurred as businesses adjusted to the slower economic pace.

## SPECIAL TOPIC

### 2001 Population Estimates

The U.S. Census Bureau recently released July 2001 population estimates. The estimates show a continued shift of population from rural to urban areas as Ada, Boise, and Canyon Counties – all in the Boise area – experienced the highest population increases. In Southeast Idaho, three of the seven counties lost population from April 2000 to July 2001. Chart 1 on page 18 shows that Bannock, Bear Lake, and Power Counties suffered population declines while Bingham,

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	March 2002*	Feb 2002	March 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,310	41,370	40,380	-0.1	2.3
Unemployment	2,450	2,390	1,780	2.5	37.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.9	5.8	4.4		
Total Employment	38,860	38,980	38,600	-0.3	0.7
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,920	41,920	40,950	0.0	2.4
Unemployment	2,630	2,800	1,950	-6.1	34.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.3	6.7	4.8		
Total Employment	39,290	39,120	38,000	0.4	0.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	33,240	33,000	33,570	0.7	-1.0
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,270	4,200	4,600	1.7	-7.2
Mining & Construction	1,700	1,640	1,670	3.7	1.8
Manufacturing	2,570	2,570	2,930	0.0	-12.3
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	28,970	28,790	28,980	0.6	0.0
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,720	1,740	1,710	-1.1	0.6
Wholesale Trade	1,420	1,400	1,460	1.4	-2.7
Retail Trade	6,730	6,730	6,970	0.0	-3.4
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,830	1,800	1,690	1.7	8.3
Services	8,060	8,020	8,060	0.5	0.0
Government Administration	3,390	3,370	3,330	0.6	1.8
Government Education	5,820	5,730	5,750	1.6	1.2

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Caribou, Franklin, and Oneida Counties experienced population increases. Population changes occur because of natural increases or decreases – the difference between births and deaths – and because of migration – the difference between people moving into and out of a county. The following summarizes population changes by county.

**Bannock County** lost 242 people from April 2000 to July 2001. Most losses were because natural increases (779) did not keep up with net migration (-992). Out-migration most likely occurred because of layoffs in 1999 at J.R. Simplot and the Union Pacific Railroad, and because college graduates had to leave the area to find suitable jobs.

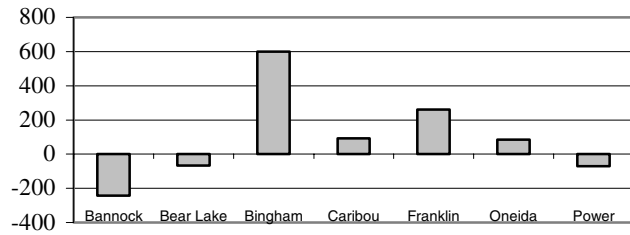
**Bear Lake County** lost 62 people from April 2000 to July 2001. Out-migration caused the decline in population caused by people leaving the county to find jobs.

**Bingham County** had the largest gain of population (600) between April 2000 and July 2001 of the seven southeast counties. Natural increases (435) and international migration (166) accounted for the increased population.

**Caribou County** gained 93 people from April 2000 to July 2001. Natural increases (56) and net migration (30) drove increased population.

**Franklin County** had the highest percentage increase (2.3 percent) in population from April 2000 to July 2001 and gained 261 people. Natural in

Chart 1: Population changes from April 2000—July 2001



creases (112) and net migration (137) contributed to the increase. People moved from Utah to Idaho to take advantage of affordable land and housing while being able to maintain their jobs in Utah.

**Oneida County** grew by 85 people from April 2000 to July 2001. Natural increases (40) and net migration (43) contributed to the gain in population. Many people who work along Utah's Wasatch front moved to Oneida County and commute to jobs in Utah.

**Power County** lost 70 people from April 2000 to July 2001. Net migration (-115) exceeded natural increases (60) to cause the decline in population.

#### AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS:

*Please note: Information contained in Economic Developments is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.*

##### Bannock County

- Farm Bureau moved into their new 93,600-square foot facility in Pocatello. The \$13 million headquarters houses 174 employees. Construction began in 2000.
- Mystic Castle, a home-based gift shop, has opened a store at Station Square in Old Town Pocatello. The business features many creations from local artists.
- An amusement park, Amusement Acres, is being built near the Pocatello Airport. The facility will include a go-cart track, remote control car track, an arcade, an 18-hole miniature golf course, meeting pavilion, and concession stand. Owners hope to have the park open before Memorial Day.
- Bids have been let for the L.E. & Thelma E. Stephens Performing Arts Center on the Idaho State University campus. Construction should begin in May and completion is expected in two years.
- Dudleys Bar and Restaurant in Old Town Pocatello closed in February. Closure of the business eliminated more than 20 jobs.
- Karen Lanes in Pocatello closed after 44 years in business. A decline in the popularity of league bowling is blamed for the closure. Employees at the

bowling alley likely will be offered jobs at the owner's other business, Tough Guy Lanes.

- J.R. Simplot's Don Plant will discontinue ammonia production and eliminate approximately 85 jobs. Nine jobs were eliminated in April and the remaining jobs will end in September or October 2002. The company has offered early retirement packages in an effort to avoid layoffs.

##### Bingham County

- First American Title Company of East Idaho broke ground on a second new office building in Blackfoot. The new 3,600-square-foot building will be located on West Pacific Street.
- Blackfoot Brass is building a new foundry building to house an automated production line for green sand molds. Upon completion, the company will hire an additional two to four workers.
- The Blackfoot Urban Renewal Agency received an Idaho Community Development Block Grant designed to eliminate slum and blight conditions and attract businesses to fill empty buildings in the downtown area. The \$400,000 grant will be used to improve curbs and gutters, replace pavement, upgrade sewer and water lines, and install new lighting, trees, benches, and bicycle racks.
- The Blackfoot Medical Clinic purchased the old Rite Aid store and is renovating it to house the clinic. The new facility will provide 46,000-square feet of space for full integration of services in one location. The renovation and relocation of the clinic's 100 employees should be complete by May 2002.

##### Oneida County

- Bids were let on the Oneida County Library addition. The 1,200-square-foot addition will be built on the south side of the current library facility. Construction is expected to begin as soon as a contractor has been selected.

##### Power County

- Direct Communications has opened an office in American Falls at 2842 Pocatello Avenue, Suite 102. The company's main business is in Rockland and its primary business is providing telephone exchange for Rockland and Paris. The store in American Falls will offer computer sales and service, telephones and accessories, and provide better service to telephone and Internet customers.

---

Shelley Allen, Regional Labor Economist  
 430 N. 5th Avenue, Pocatello, ID 83205  
 (208) 235-5454  
 E-mail: [sallen@labor.state.id.us](mailto:sallen@labor.state.id.us)